

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5575

As of February 9, 2009

Title: An act relating to creating Bellevue College.

Brief Description: Creating Bellevue College.

Sponsors: Senators Jarrett, Pflug, Tom, Oemig and Shin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 2/06/09.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: In 1957 wanting their own local college to support the region's growth, Eastside citizens and school district officials formed a community college planning committee. They convinced voters in 1962 to pass a \$575,000 levy to establish a two-year college. Residents and business people subsequently formed The Greater Eastside Community College Advisory Council and lobbied the State Legislature until, in 1965, the Legislature granted \$30,000 to underwrite planning of a community college for the Eastside.

Bellevue Community College (BCC) officially opened its doors on January 3, 1966, with evening classes at Newport Senior High School. Construction of a permanent campus began two years later, on a 96-acre site. Growth continued in the 1970s, as buildings were brought on line to complete the new campus and serve the growing student body.

The 1980s brought a period of slow or no growth as state funding cuts, in response to a serious economic downturn, confronted the college with budget challenges. The college reduced the size of its staff and cut enrollment. Improved economic times returned in the 1990s with enrollments increasing throughout the decade. The 2007-08 enrollment at BCC was 33,869.

Summary of Bill: Bellevue College (BC) is established. The trustees for the BCC District become trustees of BC on October 1, 2010, and serve until the expiration of their current terms. BC is authorized to award associate or baccalaureate degrees. In addition to the variety of financial aid available at other four-year institutions, BC students enrolled in

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Opportunity Grant eligible programs of study may receive Opportunity Grants administered by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC).

Building fees collected from students enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs are deposited in a separate capital account for BC capital projects. Building fees collected from students enrolled in associate degree programs are deposited in the Community and Technical College Capital Projects Account. BC may waive up to .75 percent of its gross operating fees for students enrolled in associate degree programs and up to 2 percent of operating fee revenue for students enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs. The tuition waiver limitation for BC is 10 percent of total gross operating revenue.

BC may provide model schools or training departments in which BC students have actual practice in teaching or courses under the supervision and observation of critic teachers. All schools or departments involved organize and direct their work being cognizant of public school needs. The board of trustees of BC must file with the board of the school district, or districts in which BC is situated, a certified statement showing an estimate of the number of public school pupils who will be required to make up the model school and specifying the number of pupils required for each grade. The board of the school district or districts must then apportion, for attendance to the model school or training department, a sufficient number of pupils from the public schools under the supervision of the board and will furnish to BC the number of pupils required at the facility. BC may refuse to accept any pupil that would tend to reduce the efficiency of the model school or training department.

Annually, on or before the date for reporting the school attendance of the school district in which the model school or training department is situated, for the purpose of taxation for the support of the common schools, BC must file a report showing the number of common school pupils at each model school or training department during the school last year, and the period of their attendance in the same form that reports of public schools are made. Any superintendent of the school district affected must, in reporting the attendance in the school district, segregate the attendance at the model school or training department from the attendance in the other schools of said district. The attendance is credited, if credit is given, to the school district in which the pupil resides.

Provisions relating to governance and capital project funding for institutions of higher education are modified to reflect the addition of BC and its coordinated structure.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 27, 2009.
[OFM requested ten-year cost projection pursuant to I-960.]

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains several effective dates. Please refer to the bill.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: In terms of growing enrollments for Washington students, we need to reach more non-traditional students. These degrees would prepare students for high quality jobs available in the Puget Sound area. BCC is prepared to

offer three four-year degree programs next year at no cost to the state. BC would remain a teaching institution, not a research institution. Students are being asked to invest in themselves, but they need financially viable options, especially in these tough times. Career advancement depends upon educational attainment more than ever, so providing opportunities for place-bound students makes sense.

CON: Our branch campuses have unrealized room for expansion. UW-Bothell has plans to expand their offerings to address the need of the area and UW-Bothell is only ten miles away. We should increase or at least sustain our investments in existing branch campuses before we consider expansion. We need to wait for the results of the applied baccalaureate pilot projects.

OTHER: There is a documented need for more post-secondary educational opportunities in this area, but given the present budget projections, we should very carefully plan our future and consider the progress we have already made. The state has significantly extended educational opportunities in the area over the last 20 years. In this time of very limited resources, we should be careful not to spread them too thin. The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) is working on a new unified state planning model, including guiding principles, for the development of higher education opportunities throughout the state. This needs to be completed this year before we make new investment decisions. Our system has a tradition of cooperation, quality, and careful planning that we need to preserve. The Strategic Master Plan is just being implemented in a thoughtful manner and we should continue under the plan.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Jarrett, prime sponsor; Jean Floten, BCC; Steve Miller, Trustee at BCC.

CON: Sherry Burkey, Western Washington University; Julie Suchanek, The Evergreen State College; Charley Earl, SBCTC.

OTHER: Ann Daley, Executive Director, HECB; Terry Teale, Executive Director, Council of Presidents; Wendy Rader-Konofalski, Washington Education Association; Ann Anderson, Central Washington University; Kenyon Chan, UW-Bothell.